A SERMON

Preach'd before the

QUEEN

AT

WHITE-HALL,

ON

EASTER-DAY, *March* 27. 1692.

By the most Reverend Father in GOD,

JOHN, Lord Archbishop of YORK,

Primate of *England* and Metropolitan.

Published by Her Majesty's Special Command.

LONDON,

Printed for *Walter Kettilby* at the *Bishop*'s *Head* in St. *Paul*'s Church-Yard, 1692.

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S.4C

The Archbiſhop of *YORK*'s

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Philip. iii. 10.

That I may know him, and the power of his Reſurrection.

WE ſhall eaſily ſee the Deſign of theſe Words, and what uſe we are to make of them, if we look at their Connexion with the Diſcourſe that goes before. St. *Paul* in this Chapter, ſets himſelf to ſhew the Excellency, and the great Advantages of the *Knowledge* of Jeſus Chriſt, and how inconſiderable, how unworthy to be named in compariſon therewith, all thoſe things were, that the Jews his Country-men ſo much gloried in. His Diſcourſe upon this occaſion is ſo very

remarkable, that it will be worth our while to run over the particulars of it.

I also (saith he in the 4*th.* verse) *might have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the Flesh, I more.* As if he had said, Think not, O *Philippians*, that I therefore speak lightly of those Privileges and Advantages which the Jews among you so much boast of, upon this account, because I have none of them my self: No, on the contrary, if I would value my self upon such outward *carnal* things, I have as much reason as any. Nay, there is not a Jew among you that perhaps can say so much on his own behalf in this respect, as I can.

For (as he goes on in the 5*th.* and 6*th.* verses.) *I was circumcised the eighth day, of the Stock of Israel, of the Tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews: as touching the Law, a Pharisee: concerning Zeal, persecuting the Church: touching the Righteousness which is by the Law, blameless.*

That is to say, I have not only the Character of a Son of *Abraham* upon me, being *circumcised*; but I am also of the Race of *Israel*, which all the circumcised Children of *Abraham* are not.

Nay further: I am an *Israelite* of the *Tribe of Benjamin*; that *Benjamin* which our Father *Israel* so dearly loved, and that *Tribe* which together with *Judah*

Judah kept firm to the houſe of *David*, and the true Religion, when the other ten *Tribes* revolted.

Nay more, *I am an Hebrew of the Hebrews.* Not ſprung from *Proſelytes*, as many among you are, but all my Anceſtors, both by Father and Mother, being natural born *Jews.*

And then as to my Profeſſion in Religion, it was the ſtricteſt among the *Jews*, for I was a *Phariſee.* And you all know that Sect of all others to be the moſt eminent for the Reputation of Preciſeneſs and Sanctity.

Neither did I in my *Zeal for the Law of Moſes* come ſhort of the ſtricteſt *Phariſee* that is among you; for who was more buſie, more eager, more violent in perſecuting *Chriſtianity* than I was?

And laſtly, To ſumm up all, *as to the Righteouſneſs which is by the Law* I am *blameleſs.* So punctual have I always been in obſerving the Precepts of *Moſes* his Law, that none can reprove me in that point; but I may truly, in the *Jewiſh* notion of *Righteouſneſs*, be accounted a Righteous Perſon.

But now am I much the better for all theſe things? Have I any great reaſon to glory upon the account of them? No, verily, (as he goes on in the 7th. verſe) *but what things were gain to me, thoſe I counted loſs for Chriſt.* All theſe outward Advantages, my Birth, my Profeſſion, my Sect, my Reputation, my

ſtrict

ſtrict way of living, which might have proved very beneficial to me in all worldly reſpects; when I once came to the knowledge of the Chriſtian Religion, I deſpiſed them all: For in truth I found that they were ſo far from being real Advantages to me, that they were rather hindrances in the way of Vertue and Piety.

Yea doubtleſs (as he goes on in the 8*th.* verſe) *I account all things but loſs for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus my Lord, for whom I have ſuffered the loſs of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Chriſt.* That is to ſay, Not only the above-named privileges, but all other things whatſoever, Wealth, Greatneſs, Fame, Friends, and Life it ſelf, I account them all very pitiful things if they be compared with the ineſtimable advantages of being a *Chriſtian.* As I have once, ſo I will again readily forſake all, part with all things that the World holds moſt dear and valuable, nay, I will trample them under my feet like *dirt* and *dung*; provided I may obtain the Favour of Chriſt.

And (as he goes on in the 9*th.* verſe) *that I might be found in him, not having my own Righteouſneſs, which is of the Law, but that which is by the Faith of Jeſus Chriſt, the Righteouſneſs which is of God by Faith.* This paſſage hath been frequently miſunderſtood, and interpreted to a ſenſe that I believe St. *Paul* did not think

think of. St. *Paul* doth not here oppoſe an *inherent Righteouſneſs* to an *imputed* one; but an *outward natural legal* Righteouſneſs to that which is *inward* and *ſpiritual*, and wrought in a Man by the Spirit of God. The *Righteouſneſs* which the Apoſtle here deſires to be found in, is not the Righteouſneſs of *Chriſt* made his, or *imputed* to him; but a *real* Righteouſneſs produced in his Soul by the Faith of Jeſus Chriſt.

The plain Senſe of the Verſe ſeems to be this. That which above all things I deſire is *to be found in Chriſt*, i. e. to be found a Diſciple of his; ingrafted into him by being a Member of his Church, *not having my own Righteouſneſs which is of the Law*, i. e. not being content with thoſe *outward* Priviledges, and that *outward* Obedience which by my own natural Strength, I am able to yield to the Precepts of the Law, which is that *Righteouſneſs* in which the Jews place their Confidence, and by which they expect to be juſtified before God; *But that which is by the Faith of Jeſus Chriſt, the Righteouſneſs which is of God by Faith*; i. e. that Righteouſneſs which I deſire, and in which only I ſhall have the Confidence to appear before God, is an inward Principle of Holineſs; that Spiritual renewed Obedience to God's Laws which he doth require as the condition of his Favour and

Acceptance, and which I can never attain to but by the *Faith of Chriſt*; by becoming a Chriſtian. This is none of my own Righteouſneſs but God's, it being wrought in me by his Spirit, accompanying the preaching of the Goſpel; and as it is his Gift, ſo he will own it, and reward it at the laſt day.

This is the full importance of that Verſe, and then it follows by way of Explication of what he now ſaid, *That I may know him and the power of his Reſurrection*, &c. This is the Righteouſneſs that I aſpire after, *that I may know Chriſt*, not only by a notional *belief* of his Doctrines, or *Profeſſion* of his Religion, but by a ſpiritual experimental Knowledge of him, ſuch a Knowledge as transforms me into his Spirit and Temper; *And that I may know the power of his Reſurrection*, i. e. that I may experience in my ſelf all the good effects, that his Reſurrection has a power to work in me; that I may feel the Vertue and Efficacy of it in my daily dying to Sin, and riſing again to a new, holy, and heavenly Life. This is that *Righteouſneſs* I long for, and in compariſon of which, I account all things in the World but as *loſs* and as *dung*.

Thus have I given you a full Account of the Text, and of all the Apoſtles Diſcourſe that it depends upon. I now come to treat more particularly

ticularly of it with reference to the ſolemnity of this Day.

We all here preſent do profeſs to believe the Article of our Saviour's *Reſurrection*, and our buſineſs at this time is to celebrate the memory of it. But we muſt not reſt here. We are not to look upon our Lord's *Reſurrection* meerly as a thing to be believed, or profeſſed, or commemorated; or as a matter of Fact that only concerned *himſelf*: But there is a great deal in it which doth nearly concern us. The Apoſtle tells us, there is a great *Power* in it; even a *Power* of raiſing us from Sin to a Holy and Vertuous Life. It is ſo ordered, as to be capable of being, and it ought to be, a Principle of *new Life* in us, as it was the beginning of a *new Life* in our Saviour. Now this Vertue, this Power, this Efficacy of it, as it is that, which with the Apoſtle we ought all moſt earneſtly to endeavour the experiencing in our ſelves; ſo it is that which will be fitteſt for us at this time to apply our Meditations to.

My Work therefore at this time ſhall be to give ſome Account of the *Power of Chriſt's Reſurrection* in order to the making Men good, which the Apoſtle here ſpeaks of; to ſhew how, or in what reſpects it doth influence upon the Lives of Chriſtians.

Now if we look into the Holy Scriptures, we ſhall find that there is a *four-fold* Power attributed to it; or that it hath an influence upon our Lives in theſe *four* reſpects. That is to ſay,

I. As it lays an *Obligation* upon Chriſtians to *Holineſs* and *Virtue*.

II. As it is the Principal *Evidence* of the Truth of our Religion, the Deſign of which is to make Men *Holy* and *Virtuous*.

III. As it is the great *Support* of our *future Hopes*, or our Hopes of another Life; which indeed is the main *Encouragement* we have to apply our ſelves ſeriouſly to the buſineſs of *Holineſs* and *Virtue*.

IV. And *Fourthly*, As to it we do principally owe all that ſupernatural *Grace* and *Strength*, by which we are *inabled* to live *Holily* and *Virtuouſly*. Of theſe four Points, I ſhall Diſcourſe very briefly.

I. And *Firſt* of all, Our Saviour's *Reſurrection* hath an influence upon our Practice, as it lays an *Obligation* upon Chriſtians to lead Holy and Virtuous Lives. As it is in it ſelf an incitement to Piety, and heavenly Mindedneſs.

This

This is indeed the loweſt inſtance of its *power*; but yet we ought not to paſs it by, becauſe the Writers of the New Teſtament do frequently inſiſt on it. For thus they argue. If Chriſt was crucified for our ſins; then ought we to crucifie them in our members. And if Chriſt roſe again the third day; then are we ingaged in conformity to him to riſe again to newneſs of life, to lead a ſpiritual, divine, *heavenly* life, ſuch a life as he now lives with God.

And this in the ancient times was taught every Chriſtian in and by his *Baptiſm*. Whenever a perſon was baptized, he was not only to profeſs his faith in Chriſt's *Death* and *Reſurrection*, but he was alſo to look upon himſelf as obliged in correſpondence therewith, to mortifie his former carnal affections, and to enter upon a new ſtate of life. And the very Form of *Baptiſm* did livelily repreſent this Obligation to them. For what did their being plunged under water ſignifie, but their Undertaking in Imitation of Chriſt's *Death* and *Burial*, to forſake all their former evil courſes: As their aſcending out of the water did their Engagement to lead a holy, ſpiritual life. This our Apoſtle doth more than once declare to us.

Thus, *Rom.* vi. 4. *We are buried* (ſaith he) *with Chriſt by Baptiſm unto death, that like as Chriſt was raiſed up*

up from the dead, by the Glory of the Father, even ſo we alſo ſhould walk in newneſs of life. Thus again in the 10*th* and 11*th* verſes of that Chapter, *In that Chriſt died, he died unto ſin once, but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God: likewiſe reckon ye your ſelves to be dead indeed unto ſin, but alive unto God through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.* That is to ſay, After the example of Chriſt's *Death* and *Reſurrection*, account ye your ſelves obliged to *die* to *ſin*, and to *live* to *Righteouſneſs*.

Laſtly, To name no more Texts, the ſame uſe doth the Apoſtle make of Chriſt's *Reſurrection* in *Coloſſ.* iii. 1, 2. *If ye then* (ſaith he) *be riſen with Chriſt, ſeek thoſe things which are above, where Chriſt ſitteth at the right hand of God. i. e.* You by entring into the Chriſtian Covenant are incorporated into Chriſt, He is your *Head*, you are his *Members*; and therefore ſince he no longer leads a life of this World, it will by no means become you to live like Worldlings or *Epicures*, but being *riſen with him* (as the Members ought to do with the Head) *to mind thoſe things that are above* where he is, *to ſet your affections* (as he goes on) *on the things above, and not on the things of the Earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Chriſt in God.*

Theſe things plainly ſhew that the Apoſtles delivered the Doctrine of Chriſt's *Reſurrection*, as a *Practical* Doctrine; as a point, which, if Chriſtians believed

believed as they ſhould do, it would ingage them to mortifie their luſts, to die to the World, to place their affections on ſpiritual things, to have their converſations in Heaven, where Chriſt our *Head*, our *Life*, now ſits at the right hand of God.

II. Great will the influence and *Power* of Chriſt's *Reſurrection* upon our lives appear to be, when we conſider that it is indeed the principal Evidence that we have for the *Truth* of our *Religion*, the very deſign of which is to make us *Vertuous* and *Holy*.

If any thing in the World can make a man good, it muſt be a hearty belief of the Goſpel. And if any thing in the World can make a man heartily to believe the Goſpel, it muſt be the *Reſurrection* of our Saviour from the dead. All that *Power* therefore, that the Goſpel of Chriſt hath to make men good; all that force and efficacy that its Arguments, its Promiſes, its Precepts, its Encouragements, its Threatnings, have upon the Underſtandings and Wills of men in order to the bringing them to Vertue and Holineſs; I ſay, all this may in a great meaſure ultimately be reſolved into the Article of Chriſt's Reſurrection. For this Reſurrection of his was the thing that did from the beginning, and doth now, and ever will aſcertain mankind of the Truth of Chriſt's Religion. This was,

and

and will be for ever, the convincing Evidence, that what *Jesus* taught was true Doctrine, that what he commanded was of perpetual obligation, that what he promised or threatned he was able to make good.

If Christ had not risen from the dead, but had for ever been detained in the Grave, notwithstanding all that might be urged from the *Goodness* of his *Doctrine*, and the *Innocency* of his *Life*, and the multitude of his *Miracles*, for the Proof of the Truth of Christianity (though yet very strong and concluding Proofs these are) I doubt it would hardly have met with that ready Entertainment in the World, that we find it did. But a great many, both then and now, would have made the same Objection against Jesus Christ and his Gospel, that the *Pharisees* did of old; that is say, That all his great Works and Miracles were done by Sorcery and Magick. And that as for the Innocency of his Life, and the great Vertue and Strictness that he expressed in his Conversation; that was only used as a Trick and an Artifice the more easily to impose upon the World. But now when it appears that that *Jesus*, who taught this holy Religion, who did those Miracles, who lived that vertuous Life; did, after he was put to a cruel death, rise again to life, and conversed upon earth for *forty* days

days together, and after that, in the preſence of many Spectatours did aſcend into Heaven: I ſay, when this appears (as God be thanked it is evident beyond all contradiction) here is no room left for any ſuſpicion of this nature; but all pretences of Impoſture do perfectly vaniſh. It is impoſſible for any conſidering man to believe Chriſt's Reſurrection, and at the ſame time to doubt of the truth of his Religion.

For thus let us reaſon. Chriſt over and over again told his Apoſtles that he ſhould be put to death, but after that, he would within three days riſe again. *Matth.* xvi. 21. xvii. 22. *John* xvi. 16.

Nay, he told this not only to the Apoſtles, but to all the People; nay, more than that, he gave this as a Token, as an Evidence to them whereby they ſhould know and be convinced that he was what he gave himſelf out to be, the Son of God and the great Prophet and Saviour that was to come. *John* ii. 19.

Nay, in the laſt place, he not only refers the Jews to his *Reſurrection* as an Evidence of his being the Chriſt, but as the laſt and greateſt Evidence that he had to give. And ſuch as if they were not convinced by, they muſt expect no other. *Matth.* xii. 39, 40.

Our Saviour now laying ſuch a mighty ſtreſs upon this point of his Reſurrection, putting his whole cauſe (as I may ſpeak) upon this Iſſue: I ask, How is it poſſible to imagine, that God Almighty ſhould make theſe predictions of our Saviour, good; if he was not really what he pretended to be?

If Chriſt had been an Impoſtor, it had been the eaſieſt matter in the World to have ſtifled all his pretences for ever. It had but been to have let him mouldered to duſt in his Grave, as all other men do, and as *He*, without the help of Omnipotency, would have done; And then all the World would have ſeen that he was a Deceiver. But now when in ſtead of periſhing in the Grave, he was after three days reſtored to life again, as he had foretold the People; nay, to a glorious, immortal Life; What are we to conclude from hence?

Did not God in this, appear with a witneſs as a Voucher and Approver of his cauſe? Was not this a demonſtration to all the World, that Chriſt Jeſus was no Deceiver, but that he came from God; and that what-ever he delivered was the Truth of God, and to be received as the Oracles of God? Certainly it was.

For

For that a man ſhould be raiſed from the Dead by any other Power, than the very Power of God; all the World knows to be impoſſible. The Devil, though he can do very ſtrange Feats in the natural World: Yet I never heard or read, that either he or any of his Agents or Miniſters, ſo much as pretended to raiſe the dead to life again. And certainly if he could have done it, he would have done it often before this, (as in the caſe of *Apollonius Tyaneus*, *Mahomet*, and others) if it had been for no other reaſon than to baffle thereby the Evidence of our Saviour's *Reſurrection*, and render it unconcluding.

It muſt therefore certainly be the Power of God that raiſed up Jeſus from the dead. But then to ſuppoſe that God ſhould employ this Power for the giving Teſtimony to a Falſhood, that he ſhould ſet his own Seal to atteſt an Untruth, as he muſt be ſuppoſed to have done, if Jeſus was not his Son: What an unaccountable thing is this? No man that believes that God is faithful and juſt and true, and that he governs the World, can poſſibly imagine ſuch a thing. For this had been to have contradicted all his own Attributes, and to have laid an invincible temptation and ſnare before all mankind to believe an Impious Lye. You ſee then what an unexceptionable Proof, (nay Demonſtra-

tion I may call it) the *Reſurrection* of Chriſt doth afford us of the Truth of his Religion; which is the *ſecond* Inſtance of the *Power* that is in it to bring men over to Holineſs and Vertue.

III. But, *Thirdly*, the *Power* of Chriſt's *Reſurrection* for the making us *holy* and *vertuous* will further appear in this reſpect. Namely, as it is in particular, the great ſupport of our Future Hopes; the great Pledge and Aſſurance of our own *Reſurrection* and *Immortality*.

For if Chriſt be riſen, then may we alſo be certain that we ſhall at laſt be raiſed by him. Becauſe Chriſt is not riſen for himſelf only, but *as the firſt-fruits of them that ſlept*, 1 Cor. xv. Good reaſon therefore had S. *Paul* to argue as he doth in that place, *If Chriſt be preached that he is riſen from the dead; how ſay ſome among you, that there is no Reſurrection?* On the contrary (as he urges) *If we believe that Jeſus Chriſt died and roſe again: Even ſo them alſo that ſleep in Jeſus will God bring with him.* 1 Theſſ. iv. 14.

For how can we deſire to be better aſſured that our *Bodies* ſhall not for ever ſleep in the Grave, but ſhall at laſt be reunited to our *Souls*, and both *Soul* and *Body* live eternally in unſpeakable bliſs and happineſs; I ſay, How can we have greater aſſurance of this

this than by what was on this day brought to paſs in our Saviour?

We have hereby a clear demonſtration that the Reſurrection is poſſible. For Chriſt who was once dead, is alive again, and lives in unexpreſſible Glory, at the right hand of God. And at the ſame time that he roſe, he raiſed up other Bodies alſo of Holy Men to accompany him in his Triumph over Death.

But that is not all. He that raiſed up himſelf and them, hath given us his ſolemn Word and Promiſe, in as expreſs terms as is poſſible, that he will by the ſame Power raiſe up us alſo; and exalt us to the ſame Glory that he is poſſeſſed of. He hath told us that he is *the Reſurrection and the Life.* And that *whoſoever believeth in him, ſhall not periſh, but have everlaſting life; and he will raiſe him up at the laſt day.* There cannot be a ſtronger Proof of any thing; than our Saviour's *Reſurrection* is of the happineſs of good Men in another State.

Which being ſo; How powerful a means muſt we needs conclude it to be, for the Reforming the manners of Mankind, and making them truly Holy and Virtuous?

Since we have thereby ſuch a Demonſtration given us of a glorious Immortality to be expected by us; what is it that can be able to hinder or divert

divert us from a ſerious purſuit of thoſe things that lead to it? What could God do more by way of Motive and Argument, towards the Proſelyting the World to Religion and Righteouſneſs, than he hath done by thus aſcertaining our future Happineſs by the Reſurrection of his Son Jeſus?

To be certain, that if we ſeriouſly apply our ſelves to a life of Piety here, we ſhall be crowned with everlaſting Felicity hereafter! To be certain, that if we follow the ſteps of our bleſſed Saviour, we ſhall for ever ſhine in the ſame Glory and Luſtre that he now doth at the right hand of his Father! To be able poſitively to ſay, *I know that my Redeemer liveth*, and I know that if I live as he did, I ſhall for ever live with him; and tho' *it doth not yet appear what I ſhall be*, yet this I know, *that when he ſhall appear I ſhall be like him!* O what noble Thoughts, what brave Reſolutions is this able to inſpire us with? What Difficulties ſhall we be afraid of? What Labours ſhall we not willingly undertake? What Temptations ſhall we not eaſily vanquiſh in the Proſpect of ſuch an eternal Crown of Glory, as awaits us, and is ſecured to us by our Lord Jeſus?

O happy we Chriſtians that have ſo clear a Revelation of thoſe things *which God hath prepared for them that love him*, thoſe things which *eye hath not ſeen*,

ſeen, nor ear heard, neither did they enter into the heart of man. Bleſſed, for ever bleſſed be our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that hath *begotten us again to this lively hope by his Reſurrection from the dead.*

O what mighty Encouragements have we to ſet our ſelves againſt our Sins, and to labour after the *Perfection* of Virtue, in compariſon of what thoſe have who are ignorant of our Saviour's *Reſurrection*, and who know nothing of the other World but by the uncertain conjectures of their natural Reaſon?

If we had no other aſſurance of the *Immortality* of the Soul, and the rewards and puniſhments of another life, but what is afforded us by the light of Nature, and the deductions of Philoſophy; I doubt we could never expect to ſee any great Reformation in our manners.

Some of the Philoſophers have indeed to their immortal Fame, aſſerted the truth of theſe things: But then others of them have as much made it their buſineſs to run them down. And as for thoſe of them that ſpoke the beſt concerning the other World, yet God knows, their Diſcourſes upon this Argument (as will appear to any that reads them) are generally very uncertain, and altogether conjectural.

But admitting their Reaſons to be ſtrong and concluſive (as I am far from denying that the *Soul's Immortality*

Immortality is demonſtrable by the light of Nature) yet there are generally theſe two Inconveniences in the Arguments they make uſe of for the Proof of this matter, which render them in a great meaſure ineffectual for the reforming mens lives.

Firſt, They are generally of ſo great Subtilty, ſo Nice, ſo *Metaphyſical*, ſo much above the reach of ordinary Capacities, that they are uſeleſs to the greateſt part of Mankind, who have not underſtandings fitted for them.

And *Secondly*, They have this inconvenience likewiſe, that a Man doth not ſee the Evidence of them, without actual attention to a long Train of Propoſitions; which attention, it may be, when a Man moſt ſtands in need of their Support, he ſhall neither have the leiſure nor the humour to give.

But now the *Chriſtian* Method of proving another Life, is quite of another ſtrain, and wholly free from theſe inconveniencies. That Demonſtration which Chriſt hath given us of a glorious *Immortality* by his Reſurrection from the dead, as it is infinitely certain and concluſive; ſo it is plain and eaſy, ſhort and compendious, powerful and operative. No Man that believes the matter of Fact, can deny the Cogency of it: Men of the meaneſt Capacities may apprehend it. Perſons

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in a crowd of buſineſs and in the midſt of temptations may attend to it. And it hath this Virtue beſides that, it leaves a laſting impreſſion upon the Spirits of thoſe that do believe and conſider it.

Thanks therefore to our Lord Jeſus Chriſt for this excellent Inſtrument of Piety, that he hath given us by his *Reſurrection*. Everlaſting Praiſes to his name, that he hath thus *brought Life and Immortality to light by his Goſpel*. This very thing alone was there nothing elſe to be ſaid for the Chriſtian Revelation, would ſufficiently juſtify both the Goſpel it ſelf, and our Lord Jeſus the Author of it, to all Mankind; nay, and effectually recommend his *Religion*, above all others that ever were taught, to all Perſons in all Nations of the World.

IV. *Fourthly* and Laſtly, There is ſtill a further Bleſſing comes to us by our Saviour's *Reſurrection* from the dead; and in which indeed is chiefly ſeen and expreſſed the great *Power* of it for the making us *Holy* and *Virtuous*. That is to ſay, Unto it we do principally owe all that ſupernatural *Grace* and *Aſſiſtance* by which we are enabled to vanquiſh our Corruptions, and to live up to the Precepts of our Religion.

As Chriſt by his Reſurrection, did oblige us to

lead new lives: As Christ by his Resurrection did demonstrate the truth of the Christian Religion, which is wholly in order to our *leading new lives*: As by his Resurrection he cleared up to us the certainty of our future State, and thereby gave us the greatest Motive and Encouragement *to lead new lives*: So in the last place, by the same *Resurrection* he acquired a Power of conferring Grace and Strength and Influence upon us, by the Virtue of which we are in fact inabled *to lead new lives*.

Tho' Christ by his death reconciled us to God, and procured the Pardon of Sin for us; yet the actual benefit of this Reconciliation, the actual application of this Pardon, did depend upon our performance of certain Conditions. Which Conditions were, that we should mortify all our evil affections, and frame our Lives suitably to the Laws of the Gospel. But now the Grace and Power by which we are inabled to do this, was not the effect of Christ's *Death*, but of his *Resurrection*.

It was *when he ascended up on high and led Captivity Captive*, that is, when he had vanquished *Death* which had vanquished all the World before; it was then, (as the Scripture assures us) and not till then that he was in a capacity *of giving gifts unto men*. It was not till he was *glorified*, as S. *John* observes, that *the holy Spirit was given*.

Hence

Hence it is, that we every where find the Apoſtles attributing the buſineſs of Man's *Juſtification* and *Salvation*, as much, or more to Chriſt's *Reſurrection*, than to his *Paſſion*. *If Chriſt be not riſen* (ſaith St. *Paul*, 1 Cor. xv.) *your Faith is vain, ye are yet in your Sins.* Indeed, if Chriſt had periſhed in the Grave, we had ſtill had all the load of our ſins upon us; becauſe we had had no aſſurance that God had accepted the Atonement and Propitiation which he had made for them. And much leſs could we have promiſed to our ſelves, that we ſhould have been aſſiſted by any Divine Power for the ſubduing of them.

Again, the ſame St. *Paul* tells us, *Rom.* iv. that *Chriſt was delivered for our ſins, and raiſed again for our juſtification.* Chriſt's *Death* was the *Sacrifice*, the *Satisfaction* for our Sins. But it was by the means of his *Reſurrection*, that that Sacrifice and Satisfaction is applied to us, and we for the merits of it become *juſtified* before God.

Laſtly, To name no more Texts, *Who* (ſaith the ſame *Apoſtle*, Rom. viii.) *ſhall lay any thing to the charge of Gods elect? It is God that juſtifyeth: Who is he that condemneth? It is Chriſt that died, yea rather that is riſen again; who is even at the right hand of God, who alſo maketh interceſſion for us.*

Here then is the great *Power* of our Saviour's *Reſurrection* to make us good. Chriſt being riſen from the dead, hath all Power given him both in Heaven and in Earth. *God*, as St. *Paul* expreſſeth it, *hath put all things under his feet, and hath given him to be head over all things to the Church*, Eph. 1. 22. Now in the fulneſs of that Power that he is inveſted with; as he doth on one hand, with never-failing efficacy make continual Interceſſion for his Church and every Member of it: So he doth on the other hand, out of the fulneſs of that Power, derive and communicate ſo much Strength and Grace and Aſſiſtance of the Divine Spirit to all Chriſtians; that if they make a good uſe of it, they ſhall not fail to perform all thoſe Conditions of *Faith* and *Repentance* and a *Holy Life*, that are required of them, in order to their being made actual partakers of all thoſe unſpeakable Benefits, which he purchaſed for Mankind by his Death and Sufferings.

Chriſt by his Reſurrection is become both our *High-Prieſt* and our *King*; both our *Advocate* and our *Lord*. By that Power which he then obtained, as our *Prieſt* and *Advocate* he doth with Authority recommend us and all our concernments to his Father. As our *King* and *Lord*, he rules and governs us; he takes care of us; he provides for us; he repreſſes

preſſes the inſults of his and our Enemies, and defeats all their attempts againſt us; And, laſtly, he ſupplies us from time to time with ſuch a meaſure of Grace and Strength, and influence of his Divine Spirit, as he ſees is needful or proper for our Condition.

If all this now that I have ſaid be the effect of our Saviour's Reſurrection, as it certainly is: Muſt we not needs own that there is a mighty power in it for the making us good? What can any man among us, that profeſſeth to believe that Jeſus was raiſed from the dead, ſay for himſelf, if he leads a wicked life? What Apology can he make for the continuance in his ſins? Will he ſay that the Temptations to ſin are too ſtrong for him; that he wants Grace, and Strength to overcome his evil Habits; and that through the corruption of his Nature he muſt of neceſſity remain a ſlave all his days to his Paſſions and Appetites whether he will or no? Why in ſaying this, he forgets that Chriſt is riſen from the dead. For if he did remember that, he would remember alſo, that there is a *Vertue* and *Power*, above that of corrupt *Nature*, which he as a Chriſtian may eaſily come by, if he ſeriouſly ſeek after it: Namely, The Grace and Strength of the Holy Spirit of God, which I have been ſpeaking of, which Chriſt upon his Reſurrection obtained the diſpoſal of; and

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which he never fails to send down upon every Soul that heartily prays for it; and when ever he gives it, he gives it in such measures, that a man may certainly, by the influence thereof, overcome all his evil and corrupt Affections; or if he do not, it shall be entirely his own fault.

O what a mighty Comfort and Encouragement ought this to be to all those that heartily desire and endeavour to be good! All such may with boldness approach to the Throne of Grace, and confidently open their wants, not doubting of such Relief as is most convenient for them. *Our Saviour is risen*, and sits at the Right hand of God. He that loved us so dearly as to die for us, is now entered into his Kingdom, and is able to grant us whatsoever we ask.

Do we find our selves burdened with our sins? Do we want strength to resist Temptations, and to master our strong Corruptions? *Our Saviour is risen*, and now *ever liveth to make intercession for us.* Let us fly to him for succour, let us beg a portion of that Grace and Holy Spirit he hath purchased for us. We may rest satisfied he will hear our Prayers, and derive such vigour and influence upon our Souls, that we shall in due time, by the means thereof, vanquish and triumph over every thing that oppoſeth us.

We

We cannot in any wiſe doubt of his *Power*, for God by raiſing him from the dead hath made him both King and Prieſt, hath exalted him to the higheſt Authority and Dignity both in Heaven and Earth. We cannot doubt of his *good will*, for he that underwent ſo many Difficulties and Agonies for us in the days of his Fleſh, cannot forget thoſe whom he hath ranſomed with ſo great a price, nor ſuffer that Power which God hath given him, to lie by him unimployed.

To conclude, Let us not faint; Let not our hearts be troubled; Let us not deſpair of any thing. *Our Saviour is riſen.* Our High-prieſt is entered within the vail, hath taken poſſeſſion of the higheſt Heaven, where he continually makes interceſſion for us. Such a High-prieſt as is kind and compaſſionate, and tender-hearted; that knoweth our frame, and remembreth that we are but duſt; that pities our weakneſſes, and is ſenſible of the difficulties we have to conflict with, as having himſelf had ſufficient experience of them. And withal, ſuch a High prieſt as is *able to ſave to the uttermoſt all thoſe that come unto God through him.*

Thus have I given ſome account of the Virtue of our Saviour's *Reſurrection*, in order to the making us ſincerely Good. What remains? But that as we ſhould heartily thank God for theſe benefits

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of it; ſo we ſhould eſpecially endeavour to be partakers of them; not contenting our ſelves with a notional, ineffectual Faith, but labouring with S. *Paul* experimentally to *know* Chriſt Jeſus *and the power of his Reſurrection.*

Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jeſus that great ſhepherd of the ſheep, through the blood of the everlaſting Covenant; make you perfect in every good work, to do his will, working in you that which is well pleaſing in his ſight, through Jeſus Chriſt, to whom be glory for and ever, Amen.

FINIS.